

Franconia

Culture

Franconia is home to the world-famous Wagner town of Bayreuth, whose green hill, atop which the *Festspielhaus* sits, attracts opera fans from across the world during late summer each year. His Margravian Opera House – which was the the real reason for Wagner's work in Bayreuth – was awarded the title "World Heritage Site" by UNESCO in June 2012. UNESCO has long since recognised the importance of culture in Franconia: Four of the UNESCO World Heritage Sites lie north of the Danube River: the Old Town of Bamberg, Balthasar Neumann's Residence in Würzburg and the Limes frontiers near Weißenburg in Bayern being the other three sites. Franconia has further reasons to be proud, however. All of the towns and cities of Franconia are home to a host of sights worth seeing: castles and fortresses, palaces and monasteries, churches and historical city centres. Former free imperial cities such as Rothenburg ob der Tauber and Dinkelsbühl have retained their medieval centres with their old timber-framed houses to this day. Remarkable palaces and churches can be found in former bishop towns such as Bamberg and Eichstätt, as well as in the former imperial city of Nuremberg. They continue to fascinate visitors to this day with their precious cultural treasures and buildings. Journeys into the cultural landscape of Franconia are always journeys into the past too. So-called *KulTour Pfade* culture trails give guests the opportunity to immerse themselves in 2,000 years of Franconian history and culture: from Roman times to the heyday of Franconian imperial cities, to industrialisation and the incorporation of the Franconian region into the Kingdom of Bavaria. Even those familiar with Franconia will again and again be amazed at what there is to discover.

Nature

Franconia is green and diverse: Natural parks make up almost half of the holiday region, spanning a total of 14,000 square kilometres. The parks include the Franconian Forest Nature Reserve with its Rhenish Uplands; the Spessart with its ancient oak trees; the Steigerwald Nature Reserve, which is renowned for its vineyards; and the Rhöen with its picturesque landscape. Franconia's impressive nature can also be enjoyed in the Altmühltal Nature Reserve – one of the sunniest spots in the whole of Southern Germany. Each park has its own unique character. Many of the hiking trails that lead through Franconia – whether you travel by bike or on foot; over the moors or through dense beech forests – have been certified

with quality seals and fulfil stringent requirements. The "Franconia Trail" is just one of 16 different certified hiking trails in Franconia. It spans 520 kilometres, from the Rennsteig in the Franconian Forest to the Swabian Alps. Meanwhile, pure, unadulterated nature and numerous cultural highlights, such as Rabenstein Castle and the Sanspareil Rock Garden, await walkers on the "Franconian Mountain Path" between the Franconian Forest and the Franconian Alps. In total, there are over 40,000 kilometres of marked hiking trails to discover in Franconia. Those who prefer to acquaint themselves with the beauty of Franconia by bike can choose from one of the many diverse cycle paths in the region. Two of the routes have been awarded five stars by the General German Cycling Club as quality cycling routes – the only "5-star Cycle Routes" in Germany: the "Main Cycle Route" and the "Lovely Taubertal – The Classic" route. In addition, there are three 4-star cycle routes: the route "From the Main to the Rhoen", the "Pegnitz Cycle Path" and the "Aischtal Cycle Path". In Franconia you can also recharge your batteries away from the walking and cycling tours; for example in one of the spas and health resorts. Natural spa treasures such as chalybeate, radon and saline thermal springs, as well as numerous historical baths and the special upland climate, give the spa programme in Franconia an extra special touch.

Culinary delights

When it comes to Franconian cooking, people tend to think of Nuremberg *bratwurst*, *lebkuchen* and Franconian wine presented in a bulbous bottle – the so-called *Bocksbeutel*. The diversity of Franconian wine is best discovered in one of the architecturally impressive *vinotheks*. When it comes to wine and architecture, Franconia has something for both the eye and the taste buds. Historical wineries have been converted into great places to enjoy true wine experiences with a modern ambience. Here, wine lovers can not only taste wines; they can also meet and chat to the vintners themselves. Franconia is a real paradise for wine lovers, but this doesn't mean that Franconia has nothing to offer when it comes to beer: After all, with around 300 breweries, the region boasts the highest density of breweries in the world. Fried shoulders of pork, known locally as *Schäufela*, are often ordered to accompany tankards of beer, which are called *Seidla* by Franconians. Other popular accompaniments include *Aischgründer carp* and *Saure Zipfel* sausages, which are cooked in water and vinegar. These classic Franconian dishes are as common to the region as modern gourmet cuisine, which often seeks inspiration from traditional dishes to create a meal that is not only full of fantasy, but produced with regional produce too.

About BAVARIA TOURISM

BAVARIA TOURISM (by.TM) is the official marketing company for the Bavarian tourism and leisure industry. Under the umbrella brand Bayern®, the company offers the entire range of tourism services in the State of Bavaria. All marketing activities run under the umbrella brand claim

“Bavaria – traditionally different”. The main focus here is the communication of authentic stories about Bavarian personalities and their way of life. They show Bavaria in a traditional yet modern light, and embody the distinctiveness of Bavaria as a travel destination. All stories can be found on the main website www.bayern.by/traditionally-different in the style of a travel magazine, and are communicated through all other channels of by.TM.

The sub-brands WellVital® in Bavaria, Kinderland® Bavaria and the hotel brand Sightsleeping® also guarantee target-group-specific offers for connoisseurs, families and culture lovers. Through its own initiatives such as “Time for Tranquility”, “Filmkulisse Bayern” (film set Bavaria) and “Aristocratic Bavaria”, it brings tourism together with other industries to create productive partnerships. In this way, the marketing company can work with all the Bavarian tourism partners, offering guests from all over the world a range of attractive and varied travel ideas.

With 37.3 million guests and 94.4 million overnight stays in the year 2017, Bavaria was able to reinforce its leading position as the number one travel destination in Germany. More information about the variety of destinations in Bavaria and about BAVARIA TOURISM can be found at: www.bavaria.by.

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